

VZCZCXRO2345  
OO RUEHLA  
DE RUEHSG #0094 0152339  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
O 152339Z JAN 06  
FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8233  
INFO RUEHAC/AMEMBASSY ASUNCION 2451  
RUEHBO/AMEMBASSY BOGOTA 1429  
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 3026  
RUEHBU/AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES 2849  
RUEHLP/AMEMBASSY LA PAZ 4430  
RUEHPE/AMEMBASSY LIMA 4407  
RUEHMN/AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO 3153  
RUEHLA/AMCONSUL BARCELONA 0011  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC  
RHMFISS/HQ USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL  
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC  
RUCPDOG/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC  
RHMCSUU/DEPT OF ENERGY WASHDC  
RUEAUSA/DEPT OF HHS WASHDC  
RUEAWJL/DEPT OF JUSTICE WASHINGTON DC  
RUEHC/DEPT OF LABOR WASHDC  
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC  
RUCNFB/FBI WASHINGTON DC

UNCLAS SANTIAGO 000094

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [SOCI](#) [CI](#)

SUBJECT: BACHELET DEFEATS PINERA TO BECOME CHILE'S FIRST  
FEMALE PRESIDENT

REF: A. KAMIAN-OPS CENTER 1/15/06 TELCON

[1](#)B. SANTIAGO 00073

[1](#)C. 05 SANTIAGO 02486

[1](#)D. 05 SANTIAGO 02495

[1](#)1. Summary: The ruling center-left Concertacion coalition's candidate Michelle Bachelet defeated center-right Alianza opposition candidate Sebastian Pinera in the January 15 run-off election to become Chile's first female president. As of 2000 local time (1800 EST), and with more than 97 percent of the vote counted, Bachelet had 53.51 percent of the vote, compared to 46.48 percent for Pinera. Pinera has conceded the election. There are no reports of election irregularities. Polling stations across the country were generally well-organized and calm. Bachelet will be inaugurated on March 11, together with the new Congress. End summary.

[1](#)2. Center-left Concertacion candidate Michelle Bachelet defeated center-right Alianza opposition candidate Sebastian Pinera during the January 15 presidential run-off election. (Bachelet and Pinera were the two top vote-getters in the December 11 first round election. Since no candidate won more than 50 percent of the vote, the two moved on to a run-off -- ref c.) Bachelet will succeed Ricardo Lagos, who could not run again as Chilean presidents are constitutionally barred from seeking a consecutive second term. A Concertacion candidate has won all four presidential elections since the return of democracy in Chile in 1990. Bachelet will be inaugurated on March 11, together with the new Congress, which also has a Concertacion majority in both houses (ref d).

[1](#)3. As of 2000 local time (1800 EST), and with more than 97 percent of the vote counted, Bachelet held 53.51 percent of the vote, compared to 46.48 percent for Pinera. Bachelet leads Pinera in all but two of the regions. Approximately one hour after the government's initial release of the

results (which was based on two-thirds of the vote counted), Pinera conceded the election in a short, gracious televised speech.

14. There have been no significant reports of election-related irregularities or violence. Voting booths throughout the country began opening at 0700 local time, with a number of voters voting early to avoid long lines and higher temperatures later in the day. Reports from individuals who visited polling stations in the Santiago Metropolitan area confirmed that the atmosphere was orderly, calm and routine.

KELLY